

2012 Annual Report



Tourism Center

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Message from the Director

Hello,

In 2012, the Tourism Center celebrated 25 years of research, education, outreach and engagement. Tourism is a major driver in Minnesota, the nation, and the world, which is why we seek to illuminate the potential of every business and community to grow tourism sustainably. We are honored that our research continues to inform decisions on legislative issues and pressing marketing and development challenges. We are proud that our educational products and programs continue to meet the demands of a thriving industry. We are excited for the next 25 years of our research and educational breakthroughs in community tourism development, festival and event management, and multicultural customer service.

Your support ensures that we are able to inform decisions, engage communities, and educate the tourism workforce for the next quarter century. Without it, we cannot accomplish our mission to lead, prepare, and support the tourism industry and tourism dependent communities for success and sustainability. Consider how you can further engage with us through activities, events or investments.

As we solidify our vision and priorities for the next 25 years, we are planning several sessions to obtain your input on how we can enhance our positive impacts on Minnesota's travel and tourism industry. If you are unable to offer your suggestions at one of these sessions, we welcome you to connect with us any time on our website, on Facebook, LinkedIn, or on Twitter. We look forward to your suggestions on how we can enhance our work to more effectively lead, prepare and support the tourism industry.

I look forward to connecting with you soon!

Ingrid E. Schneider, Ph.D.
Director of the Tourism Center



Support for the Center

Since its inception over 25 years ago, the Carlson Chair for Travel, Tourism and Hospitality has contributed generously towards important research and education for the Minnesota tourism industry. In 2012, the Tourism Center supported several research projects to inform and enhance the tourism industry. These projects were: the economic impact of museums in Minnesota, the impact of the labor day school start on family leisure travel, and the internet sophistication of Minnesota travel and tourism operators. Beyond these projects, the Carlson Chair helps to support Tourism Center communication efforts and sponsors the Travel and Tourism Research Association's Best Illustrated Paper award.

The Tourism Center's development sub-committee, chaired by Doug Killian, works to raise additional funds to support our efforts. We want to sincerely thank our development sub-committee members for their insight, energy and outreach: John Edman, Randy Gutzman (emeritus advisory committee), Chris Romano, Linnea Stromberg-Wise (emeritus advisory committee), and Hank Todd. We would also like to welcome Bill Foussard to the development sub-committee!

Please visit our website at www.tourism.umn.edu to invest in the Tourism Center or learn more about how we lead, prepare and support the tourism industry and tourism-dependent communities for success and sustainability.



Honoring Dr. Simonson

In 2012, we lost an insightful, instrumental and valued leader in the tourism industry - Dr. Larry Simonson. Larry was a founding father of the Tourism Center and a pioneer in tourism at the University of Minnesota. Among his many honors and accomplishments, Larry was the first recipient of the Outstanding Individual of Tourism Award bestowed on him by the governor in 1987. The Tourism Center wishes to commemorate Dr. Simonson's passion and dedication to the Minnesota tourism industry.



Informed Decisions

Family travel and school year start

Elton Mykerezi & Genti Kostandini, supported by the Carlson Chair for Travel, Tourism & Hospitality



An ongoing policy question is the impact of the Labor Day school start on leisure travel. This groundbreaking study compared several states and found that family trips decreased by 50% in August and September and overnight trips decreased by 30% from May to September when school start dates were moved to before Labor Day. The results provided missing data for policy makers considering ending a Minnesota mandate that school districts start after Labor Day. Results generated national media attention and influenced future research considering year-round school impacts on family travel.

Economic contribution of museums in Minnesota

Brigid Tuck & Bruce Schwartau, supported by the Carlson Chair for Travel, Tourism & Hospitality and the Minnesota Association of Museums

In 2011, Minnesota's 562 museums, historic sites, nature centers, zoos and arboreta contributed an estimated \$674 million to the state's economy and employed approximately 5,300 workers. A study on the economic impact of Minnesota's museums found that roughly 1.7 million visitors traveled from outside the state to Minnesota museums in 2011 which generated an additional \$53 million in revenue for tourism and hospitality businesses. Results are expected to encourage communication among museum professionals and increase awareness of the importance of museums to the state's economy.



Twin Cities metropolitan area summer visitor profile

Andrew Oftedal & Ingrid Schneider, supported by the Metro Tourism Association

In the summer of 2012, the Tourism Center conducted a profile of visitors to the Twin Cities metro area, including their trip planning and social media habits. Friends and family remained the number one source of information, although online travel reviews increased in use for trip planning information.



Nearly 35% of visitors used Facebook for trip planning or to document their trip, while sites like Instagram and Twitter were used less frequently. Compared to a similar 2007 survey, the area saw a rise in international tourists and more groups traveling with children. Results of the study will help improve the effectiveness of tourism marketing and planning in the Twin Cities metro area.

Educated Workforce

Festival and Event Management trains festival and event organizers and volunteers to run successful events. In 2012, we transitioned the course to an interactive, online format to meet the needs of busy professionals and time-crunched volunteers. Participants gained a foundation and expertise on site management, budgeting and financial planning, marketing and sponsorship, human resource management and volunteer recruitment, and event evaluation. The Timely Topic session for fall 2012 was Social Media & Events, which illuminated the increasingly important role that social media plays in festivals and events and how to take advantage of social media's capabilities to improve event marketing and management. In 2013, the timely topics will include multicultural customer service, social media, and the economic impacts of festivals.



At Your Service: Working with Multicultural Customers builds skills and knowledge needed by staff to deliver quality customer service to diverse populations. In 2012, our Extension Educators delivered workshops for over 200 participants across the state in both the public and private sectors, including training instructors from the Latino Economic Development Center. Participants in the workshops were highly satisfied with the program, noting that the training was “very good and educational” and “excellent for all staff.” To serve an increasingly diverse service industry, we expanded our marketing efforts and focused on building awareness of the program in the Latino business community.



Educated Workforce

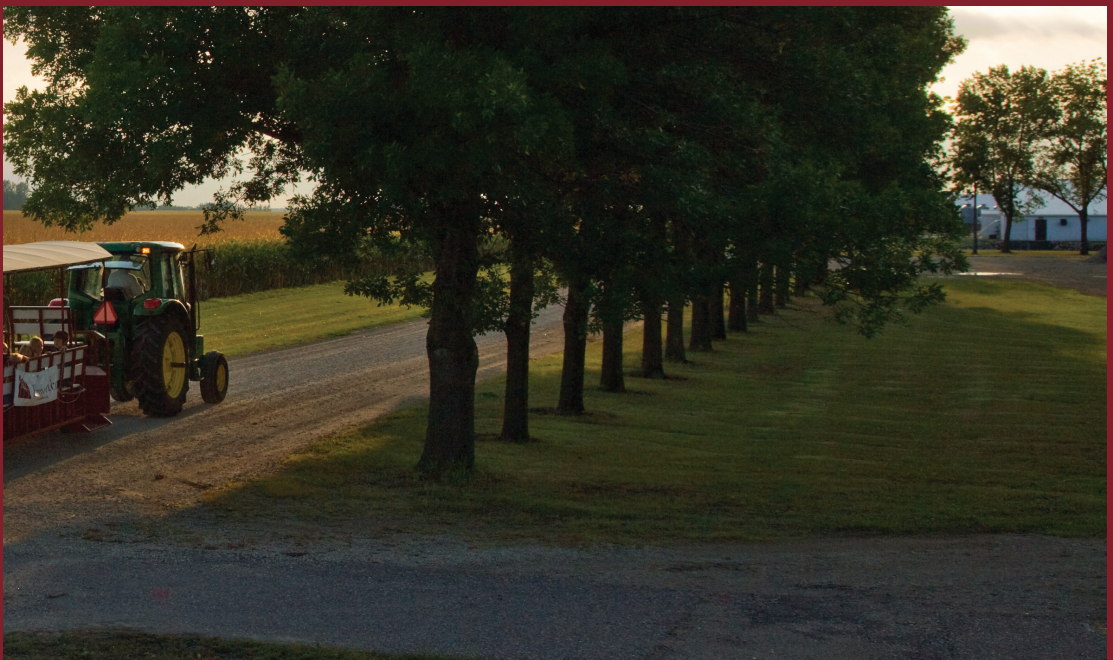
Tourism Development includes a suite of services and products focused on sustainable community tourism development.

The Tourism Assessment Program helps communities discover their tourism potential through an assessment of tourism assets and consultation with University tourism specialists. Results from the assessment are shared with community members to spark discussion of sustainable tourism growth strategies to support local businesses. In 2012, Liz Templin and Cynthia Messer presented outcomes and impacts of a Tourism Assessment conducted in Lindstrom, MN.



Communities seeking to develop a local tourism economy and tourism educators nationwide can also rely on the *Community Tourism Development Guide* and the film *Weaving Tourism into Community: Four Stories Over Time*. Starting in 2012, the University of Maine Cooperative Extension incorporated the materials into their rural tourism program in northern Maine. Educators who used the program reported that “Students and community leaders who work with this DVD readily get the key points of information which distinguish community and business successes with rural tourism development.”

Market Area Profiles organize data from multiple sources into a comprehensive description of those who shop in and visit a community – their demographics, purchasing power, lifestyles, information sources and values. Our analysts organize this data into easy-to-understand reports and lead discussions about the learning. The information stimulates a plan for businesses and the community to proactively meet the needs of customers and tap opportunities to increase revenue.



Engaged Communities

Gartner, W. *Role of marketing in the Northern Grape Wine Project*. Minnesota Wine and Grape Growers Annual Conference: St. Paul, MN.

Messer, C.C. *Customer service in your marketing mix*. Hispanic Marketing Conference: St. Paul, MN.

Messer, C.C. *Hospitality and tourism: Partners in combating child sex trafficking*. Minnesota Lodging Association: Minneapolis, MN.



Messer, C.C. & Baker, R.G. *What's your style? Using the KOLB Learning Style Inventory*. Workshop, International Society of Travel and Tourism Educators Conference: Freiburg, Germany.

Oftedal, A. & Schneider, I.E. *Outdoor recreation and health: Results from county-level analysis in Minnesota*. The International Society of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity: Austin, TX.

Schneider, I.E., Guo, T. & Courtney, A. *Toward active transportation in Minnesota: Implications from a statewide survey*. University of Minnesota Institute on the Environment's Frontiers Series: St. Paul, MN.

Schneider, I.E., Tuck B. & Liechty, R. *Beyond the byway: Scenic byway contributions to economy and quality of life*. Transportation Research Board: Washington, D.C.



Schneider, I.E. & Senese, D. *Tourism in Minnesota: Implications and opportunities for cultural heritage tourism*. International Rural Tourism Exposition: Taroudant, Morocco.

Templin, E. *Case study of Swedish heritage tourism development in Lindstrom, Minnesota, USA*. International Joint World Cultural Tourism Conference: Bangkok, Thailand.

Tuck, B. & Messer, C.C. *Economic impact of museums in Minnesota: Using the information in your community*. Keynote, Minnesota Association of Museums' Conference: Duluth, MN.

Tourism Center Team

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2012 Community Vitality Colleagues

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Photos courtesy of: Adam Hayes,
Brian Moen, Paul Weimer, Jeff
Wilson, & Brenny Funeral Chapel.

The University of Minnesota Tourism Center is a collaboration of the
College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences and
the University of Minnesota Extension. The University of Minnesota
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